

ISAC Meeting – May 2012

ACTION OR INFORMATION ITEM

SPONSOR (Name/Email): Dan Hilburn

TOPIC: giant reed grass, *Arundo donax*

SPEAKER (Name/Email): Tim Butler of ODA and Wayne Lei of Portland General Electric

1. DESCRIPTION OF AGENDA ITEM:

Oregon has begun a giant experiment with giant reed grass, *Arundo donax*. Last year rhizomes were planted for biofuel on 90 test acres by Portland General Electric in Morrow County. The farmers hope that 20-ft tall canes will someday be a substitute for coal to run the Boardman Power Plant. Giant reed grass is attractive as a source of biomass fuel because it grows fast, like a weed. In fact it *is* a serious noxious weed in some places, including southern states like California, Texas, and Florida. Oregon is on the edge of the range of this grass. It grows well and becomes invasive in warm, wet habitats. In Oregon it has been sold as a nursery ornamental for years. It has also been tested as a crop in Prosser, Washington. It hasn't shown invasive tendencies in the Pacific Northwest, but it has never been planted on large acreages either. We can hope that Oregon is in a zone where giant reed grass will grow under cultivation with human assistance, but not in the wild where it could be weedy.

2. WHY IS THIS ITEM IMPORTANT TO NISC / ISAC? HOW IS IT RELATED TO THE NATIONAL INVASIVE SPECIES MANAGEMENT PLAN?

3. PREVIOUS ACTIONS TAKEN BY NISC / ISAC ON THIS ITEM:

4. ACTION REQUESTED OF NISC / ISAC:

5. ALTERNATIVES:

6. ATTACHMENTS: